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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/050,928	01/22/2002	Hiroshi Kawai	218353US0	3871

22850 7590 03/03/2004

OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
1940 DUKE STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

RAJGURU, UMAKANT K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1711

DATE MAILED: 03/03/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/050,928	Applicant(s) KAWAI ET AL	
	Examiner Umakant K. Rajguru	Art Unit 1711	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

1. Claims 1-16 are presented for examination.
2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 is vague because (a) the upper limit of water content of ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer is not specified. (b) it is not clear what is quantitatively meant by "fine particles" and (c) it is known what the % is based on. How fine are these particles?

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

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5. Claims 1-5 and 9-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mayer et al (US 532866).

(Mayer is cited on PTO 1449)

Mayer describes a method for producing starch-based product. Unprocessed starch is combined with copolymers such as ethylene-vinyl alcohol, a nucleating agent, a plasticizer and water and then processed in an extruder (abstract; col. 2, lines 43-55).

Starch is a polymer and it forms dispersion or a solution when admixed with water. It is also to be noted that ethylene-vinyl alcohol with water produces a dispersion (as ~~claimed~~^{claimed} in instant claim 3). Amounts of copolymer and starch are set forth in examples. In col. 3 line 40, patentee suggests the addition of calcium stearate (as claimed in instant claim 14). The product extruded can be in the form of films, rods, tubings & other shapes (col. 4, lines 13-21).

As regards instant claims 9-13, it is the examiner position that limitations of these claims are known in the art and one of ordinary skill in the art would also make changes in the limitations taught by prior art to obtain a desired end product.

It would therefore have been obvious to follow teachings of Mayer and arrive at instant invention.

6. Claims 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mayer et al (US 5322866) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Makio et al (JP 05039390) or Kenji et al (JP 200043038).

(Makio and Kenji are cited on PTO 1449).

Mayer does not mention the claimed inorganic particles and their amounts.

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Makio discloses a composition consisting of an ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer and phyllosilicate

NR Kenji discloses incorporation ^{of} ~~an~~ oxide (like silicon oxide or aluminum oxide) in saponified ethylene-vinyl acetate copolymer.

Therefore it could have been obvious to add a silicate, or an oxide to the ethylene-vinyl alcohol polymer to impart transparency, gas barrier property or to improve slipperiness.

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

8. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Mayer et al (US 5322866).

Disclosure of Mayer (above) proves that claim 1 lacks novelty

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to U. K. Rajguru, whose telephone number is (571) 272-1077. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 9:30 am to 6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James J. Seidleck can be reached on (571) 272-1078. The fax phone

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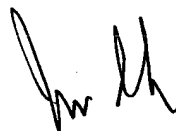
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number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703)

872-9306.



U. K. Rajguru/af
February 18, 2004



James J. Seidleck
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1700